

VZCZCXRO2961
OO RUEHDE RUEHDIR
DE RUEHKU #1421/01 2630906
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 200906Z SEP 07
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9981
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KUWAIT 001421

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FOR NEA/ARP, INL/HSTC, AND G/TIP

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [ELAB](#) [KU](#) [TIP](#)
SUBJECT: DOMESTIC WORKER SHELTER NEARS COMPLETION

REF: A. STATE 120572
[1](#)B. KUWAIT 1251
[1](#)C. KUWAIT 1166
[1](#)D. KUWAIT 1099

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary. On September 18, GOK officials gave PolOff a tour of the GOK's shelter for potential victims of trafficking, which is scheduled to open by September 26. The two-building complex is basic but clean. It has recreation and kitchen facilities and will be able to house approximately 50 - 60 female refugee seekers. There are offices for social workers, psychological counselors, medical personnel, and GOK administrative agencies, and the GOK says they will be fully staffed by the time the shelter opens. The shelter will be a temporary solution until a permanent 700-bed shelter can be established, which a GOK representative said would take approximately two more months. While final judgment must be withheld until the actual opening of the shelter, the progress so far represents evidence of a concrete GOK effort to address concerns raised in the TIP report. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) GOK officials from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MOSAL) and Ministry of Justice (MOJ) provided PolOff on September 18 with a tour of a shelter for potential victims of trafficking, which is set to open by September 26. The shelter occupies a little-used facility originally designed to house troubled youths. It consists of two buildings and a grassy enclosed outdoor recreation area. The main building has a number of offices, a recreation room with couches and a television, a kitchen, a dining room, several bathrooms with showers, and approximately 8 bedrooms each with a capacity of 6-8 beds (though the beds were not in place as of PolOff's visit). The second building contains a large meeting room and offices. The office doors have been labeled for their respective purposes: social workers, psychological counselors, medical services, etc. Overall it is a modest yet clean facility, and final touches, such as paint and a new floor in the dining room, were being applied during PolOff's visit.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Jamal Al-Dossary, Director of Legal Affairs at MOSAL, and Zakaria Al-Ansari, Director of the International Relations Department at MOJ, told PolOff that their ministries have been working intensively with the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and the Ministry of Health to make preparations for the shelter. MOSAL is the lead agency in the shelter effort and Al-Dossary said specialized staff -- nurses, social workers, translators, etc. -- have been identified and are ready to start work immediately. MOI officials will also staff the shelter, since those seeking refuge in the shelter will likely be domestic workers and since the MOI technically has jurisdiction over domestic workers. Al-Dossary welcomed PolOff's suggestion that independent lawyers staff the shelter for several hours a day to help workers redress and legal grievances.

¶4. (SBU) The shelter is a temporary facility that will fill the need for a shelter until a permanent, 700-bed facility can be opened. Al-Dossary said MOSAL would soon put out a public tender to obtain a building to house the permanent facility, which he expects to be ready by the end of November. He also said that the relevant ministries would finalize the rules and procedures for the permanent shelter before it opened. In the interim, MOSAL is working to come up with a set of governing rules for the temporary shelter.

¶5. (SBU) MOSAL will have the MFA send a note to source country embassies informing them of the shelter's existence and welcoming referrals. It is also considering media strategies to publicize the existence of the shelter.

¶6. (SBU) Comment: Apparently in direct response to USG urging (see refs B, C, and D), the GOK has in recent weeks put considerable effort into accelerating the actual opening of an interim shelter. While rules and regulations have not been finalized, the GOK recognizes that the shelter must provide a wide range of services so that it is not simply a detention center where workers will languish. The physical facilities are basic yet adequate. If the GOK is able to have the shelter staffed, it will be a tangible achievement for both the GOK and the USG, as well as evidence of a genuine Kuwaiti commitment to address the TIP problem. End Comment.

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